

## EMBASSIES OF CUBA IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC NEWSLETTER



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### ABSTRACT

*The recent Israeli Defence Force attack on unarmed Palestinian protesters is our lead story followed by news of Cuba's support for Brazilian former president Lula da Silva. Azerbaijan and Cuba are at one on the importance of the role of the Non-Aligned Movement and Vietnam acclaims a new era in Vietnam-Cuba trade. In other news private company Sherritt International and UNICEF have formed a new alliance to cut down on traffic accidents to young people in Cuba while we learn that Cuba's infant mortality rate is lowest in the Americas; the FECONS construction fair is involving 236 countries followed by promotion for the Mariel Development Zone in Peru and news of Cuba's deep-water horizontal oil exploration well offshore Matanzas. In the world of Culture and Arts some 50 events will be showcased as Artes de Cuba at Washington's Kennedy Centre during May, and finally to Sport, and news of a strong Cuban presence at various international events on the mainland.*

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### INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

## Cuba condemns new Israeli attack on Palestinians

The Cuban Foreign Affairs Ministry has deplored the new escalation of violence by Israel in the Strip of Gaza, a place in which the oppression left at least 17 dead and 1,400 injured people.

'We express our strongest condemnation to the new criminal aggression of the Israeli Army against the Palestinian population in the Strip of Gaza,' said a statement by Emilio Lozada, director general of Bilateral Affairs of the Cuban Foreign Ministry



this week.

Lozada said it was a brutal action that constituted a serious and flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations and humanitarian international rights which sharpened tensions in the region and made any possibility of any effort to restart peace conversations between Israel and Palestine much more distant.

'We call once again on all states, international bodies, the United Nations Security Council and the international community as a whole to demand an immediate end

to this aggression and to put an end to the expansionist and colonising policies,' he said, reiterating Cuba's solidarity with the Palestinian government and people and its support for a comprehensive, fair and lasting solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Lozada reminded the position of Cuba was to support a way out of the conflict that permits Palestinians to have the right to free determination as an independent and sovereign country, with its capital in Eastern Jerusalem and the borders previous to 1967.

*Prensa Latina, April 3*



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INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

## **MINREX: Cuba expresses solidarity and support for Lula**

*Declaration from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' director general for Latin America, Eugenio Martínez Enríquez*

The Federal Republic of Brazil's Federal Supreme Court has rejected the ha-

beas corpus appeal presented by the defence team of the country's former president and leader of the Workers Party, Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva.

As has just been confirmed, this decision opens the door to Lula's possible immediate detention, an act that would be extremely serious.

The decision is a new expression of the ongoing, unjust campaign against Lula, against the Workers Party, and progressive, left forces in Brazil, says Enriquez.

'Lula continues to enjoy broad popular support, international recognition and affection, as a result of the successes of his administration that benefited the vast majority, who are now facing an attempt to deny them the right to elect him again as president, to open the way for neoliberal forces and reverse his accomplishments.

'Once again, we express our solidarity and support of compañero Lula.'

*Granma, April 6*

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INTERNATIONAL EVENTS

## **Azerbaijan, Cuba, stress NAM's role in peacekeeping**

The governments of Azerbaijan and Cuba have highlighted the important role played by the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in defence of international peace and security.

This was stated by Azerbaijani foreign minister, Elmar Mammadyarov, and Cuban deputy foreign minister, Abelardo Moreno, at a bilateral meeting held during the celebration in Baku of the 18th Conference of that multilateral group.

Mammedyarov reaffirmed during the talks his government's stance condemning the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on the island for more than five decades.

In these talks, the Cuban deputy foreign minister thanked Azerbaijani and denounced the extraterritorial dimension of the blockade, particularly in the financial sector.

The two sides also agreed on the need to strengthen the movement, as expressed in the last four days during the deliberations with senior officials, foreign ministers or their representatives.

The capital of the Caucasian country hosted the 18th Conference, preparatory to the summit of heads of state and government of that forum, to be held in 2019, when Azerbaijan will assume the presidency of the third-world group until 2022.

Azerbaijan and Cuba established diplomatic relations in 1994.

***Cadena Agramonte, April 6***

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INTERNATIONAL EVENTS



## **Minister acclaims a new era in Vietnam-Cuba trade**

The visit to Cuba of the secretary general of the Communist Party of Vietnam, Nguyen Phu Trong, opens a new chapter in our trade and cooperation relations, says its minister of industry and trade Tran Tuan Anh.

One of the most important results was reaching a consensus between this portfolio and that of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment of Cuba to complete the negoti-

ations for a bilateral trade agreement as soon as possible, said Tuan Anh, who was part of the delegation that was in the island.

The two sides will review the legal framework to sign the agreement as soon as possible in order to promote trade, joint productions, investments and access to the respective markets, he stressed.

Noting that Vietnam has become the second largest partner of Havana in Asia after China, with billings in both directions of over 220 million dollars, the minister pointed out that his country has an important role in the development strategy of the Caribbean nation.

During the visit of Nguyen Phu Trong, Cuba granted investment licences to several Vietnamese companies in tourism, construction of power plants and agriculture, he explained.

In addition, he added, a series of agreements was reached in several areas, from education and training of personnel, justice and technology to the environment.

He also expressed the view that the Vietnam-Cuba business forum brought together over a hundred companies from both sides that examined other areas with high potential for cooperation, for possible productive, investment and technology transfer projects.

***Prensa Latina, April 2***



## **UNICEF-Sherritt alliance in Cuba to foster child safety**

Sherritt International, a private company, and UNICEF have announced the formation of an alliance between the two of them in Cuba, seeking to further prevent injuries caused by traffic accidents to children and adolescents.

Andree-Clause Berube, representative of Sherritt International, pointed out that this alliance is the implementation of an agreement signed in October 2017, which amplifies the 10 years work that the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has carried out with other institutions to prevent unintentional injuries.

This project, which will last three years and has been allocated some \$ 200,000 USD by Sherritt, supports the actions carried out by the National Commission of Road Safety (CNSV) to prevent traffic accidents, one of the main causes of death. The project will have important actions in communities of the provinces of Matanzas and Holguin, which have 13 and 14 municipalities, respectively, including Moa and Cardenas, in which Sherritt operates.

These regions have a total population of 408,747 people under 19 years.

The actions in those municipalities seek to boost culture on the roads in the schools by creating theme parks, as well as the encouragement of parents and the communities to participate in activities aimed at increasing road safety education and the improvement of Sherritt's actions on safety road, seeking to protect its employees.

Cuba has the law 109/2010 of the Highway Safety Code, which outlines a strategy and a national safety plan for varied sectors, following the Sustainable Development Goals and the Decade of Actions for Road Safety declared by the General Assembly of the United Nations.

According to UNICEF representative in Cuba Maria Machicado, the support of Sherritt International is an important contribution to increase the road culture of the population and thus ensure safer environments in the lives of children and teenagers.

Referring to corporate social responsibility, Sherritt's director of corporate affairs and sustainability Mark Sitter highlighted that his company was a responsible investor with a 25-year history in Cuba.

***CubaSí, April 4***



## Cuba Celebrates World Health Day with achievements in health care

With health coverage throughout its geography and achievements in the different levels of care, Cuba will celebrate World Health Day, established on April 7, authori-

ties highlighted here.

Cristian Morales, representative on the island of the world (WHO) and Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), praised the Cuban indicators in comparison with results from more developed nations, especially the infant mortality rate that registered four per one thousand born alive in 2017, the lowest in the Americas.

He also highlighted, among other results, the elimination of immune-preventable diseases such as malaria and the certification and re-certification for two more years of the elimination of the mother-child vertical transmission of HIV and congenital syphilis.

Morales stressed that Cuba has much to show to the world in terms of universal coverage, a theme that defines this year's campaign for the anniversary.

Universal health means that all people and communities have access, without prejudice, to health services without having to be exposed to financial difficulties, he commented.

'That is why we dedicated the day of April 7 to the importance of health for all, to the need to facilitate access in the Americas to those services and policies that prioritise them,' he stressed.

A statement published by the WHO confirms that actions are needed from all sectors of society to address poverty, social injustice, education deficit and unhealthy housing, among other factors that influence health status of people.

In 1948, the First World Health Assembly proposed the establishment of a World Health Day to commemorate the founding of WHO and urge governments, organizations and companies to invest in health to forge a safer future.

**CubaSí, April 6**

## International Fair analyses innovations for work designs in Cuba

A new day of business exchanges and exhibitions characterises the International Construction Fair in Cuba, FECONS 2018, where, among other issues, innovative design solutions are being addressed.

The biannual meeting involves 26 countries, including Spain, Italy and Cuba, as most represented countries and others such as Hungary, Brazil, Panama, Mexico, which will interact with the 124 companies attending the PABEXPO exhibition site until April 6.



The new visions related to construction include the use of energy and protection of the environment, as well as constructive solutions to face extreme weather events and climate change.

Special attention will be focused on the application of current computer techniques and management and project management, and is-

issues related to the rehabilitation and maintenance of the built heritage.

Other contents of interest are linked to traditional materials of traditional construction, new development and recycling; experiences of application of new, advanced and local manufacturing technologies.

FECONS 2018 takes place under the slogan for better performance and sustainability in the construction sector and with Venezuela as a guest of honour.

Parallel to this event is the 12th International Scientific-Technical Construction Conference, has concluded at the Conference Centre in Havana, in which more than 400 professionals from 14 nations participated.

*Prensa Latina, April 5*

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*INSIDE CUBA*



## **Cuba will show its exportable portfolio at Peru's business forum**

The main exportable offers of Cuba and its investment opportunities, mainly in the Special Mariel Development Zone (ZEDM), will be presented by the national delegation at the III Business Summit to be held

in Peru on April 12 and 13.

In the context of the VIII Summit of the Americas, which will be attended for the second time by the Antillean nation with a broad representation of its civil society, the aforementioned business forum will be held with the participation of four Cuban businessmen.

Orlando Hernandez Guillen, president of the Chamber of Commerce of the Republic of Cuba and a member of that mission, told ACN that although it is a small delegation, it is made up of representatives of key areas of the island's economy. He commented that medical services and the pharmaceutical and biotechnological sector, which are the main exportable items of the country to Latin America, will be present.

According to Hernández Guillén, the ZEDM completes the list as a reflection of the leading role that Cuba is currently giving to foreign investment to boost priority sectors such as industry, biotechnology, energy, tourism and telecommunications. The head of the chamber said that they will also show interests from other sectors, taking into account the broad portfolio of opportunities for attracting foreign capital. He stressed that important companies from the hemisphere will be attending, which will be a propitious scenario for the Caribbean nation's will to increase its ties, from a commercial and investment point of view.

Recalling the last Summit of the Americas, Hernandez Guillen stressed that it was the first time that the Greater Antilles attended and did so as an established right. Three years ago, a high-level Cuban delegation was in Panama at the meeting of heads of state and government, as a result of the unanimous consensus of the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean.

**ACN, April 5**

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*ENERGY & INDUSTRY*



**Cubans drill the deepest horizontal oil well in Latin America**

Using an extended-reach drill, Cuba is developing what has been considered the deepest horizontally-drilled oil well in Latin America — as deep as 8,240 metres. Operations are based on 100 percent Cuban capital and thus far the extended-reach drilling has gone over 6 000 metres on the coast of central Matanzas province.

A record depth is expected to be reached this year. Such a drilling uses a technology that allows the use of crude oil under the sea from the coast, which lowers investment costs, according to Cuban Oil expert Marcos Antonio Pestana, as cited by Juventud Rebelde newspaper.

Boca de Camarioca is the area for current drilling, a site that saw the first operations in 2016. The first extended-reach drilling was called Varadero 1000 while at present there are nine wells drilled with that technology.

The Oil Drilling Company in central Cuba closed the first quarter of this year after producing 8 000 tons of oil over schedule and meeting gas-delivery plans.

At present, the company is drilling six new wells with promising results for the country, said Pestana, who added that operations have expanded along the coast towards central Ciego de Avila province, on the east of the island.

**ACN, April 5**

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CULTURE AND ARTS



## **From the island to the world, Cuban art in Washington**

The most extensive presentation by Cuban artists to take place in the United States is scheduled this coming May 8 through June 3, in Washington's renowned Kennedy Centre

The program, including some 50 events under the title of "Artes de Cuba: From the Island to the World," was announced in Havana, March 28, by deputy minister of culture Fernando Rojas, who emphasised the importance of the event as indicative of the interest in building bridges of harmony and understanding between the two peoples.

'I can assure you that Cuban artists,' he said, 'will convey our cultural values and our desire to promote exchanges in this field, within a climate of peace.'

The May 8 inauguration, in Eisenhower Hall, will feature Omara Portuondo, who will head the bill and be joined by pianists Rolando Luna, Aldo López Gavilán and Pachequito; saxophonist Yosvany Terry; singer Aymée Nuviola; the Miguel Faílde Danzón Orchestra; and the University of the Arts Orchestra affiliated with Havana's Lyceum Mozartiano.

To close the program, the National Ballet of Cuba, led by the great Alicia Alonso, will travel to the U.S. capital for successive performances of Don Quijote and Giselle, May 29-June 3.

Some 400 artists, half from the island, will present intense days of music, ballet, contemporary dance, theatre, and visual arts. Cuban musicians based in the United States and France, as well as outstanding visual artists from the island, José Parlá and Emilio Pérez, are set to participate.

Also featured is a film series, with a selection of Cuban classics (*Memorias del subdesarrollo*, by Tomás Gutiérrez Alea; *Retrato de Teresa*, by Pastor Vega; *Andy Lucía*, by Humberto Solás), and prizewinning films from Havana's Latin American Festival of New Cinema (*Fresa y chocolate*, by Gutiérrez Alea and Juan C. Tabío; *Suite Habana*, by Fernando Pérez; and *Conducta*, by Ernesto Daranas), as well as a movie poster exposition mounted by Cuba's Film Institute, ICAIC.

Scheduled as well are fashion shows by designers Celia Ledón and Nachy Carmona, and 'Arte y Moda' projects, directed by Maestro Rafael Méndez and director Juan Carlos Marrero, plus typical Cuban food and cocktail tastings.

Eight halls and 22 other spaces within the Kennedy Centre are being utilized for presentations. Addressing the motivation behind organizing the mega-event, the



Centre's vice president Alice Adams stated, '...the United States has Cuban music and Cuban arts in its DNA. Looking at all of that is what's fascinating to me.'

The vast majority of artists participating in the event, including those who reside abroad, have been trained in the art schools created in Cuba since the 1959 triumph of the Revolution. These are creators and performers of recognised talent and indisputable mastery, many of whom are innovators in their art forms, but all in one way or another are linked to their roots.

Deputy minister Rojas emphasized "the professionalism and seriousness of the collaboration between the Kennedy Centre and our institutions and artists, at a time when, as we know, there have been restrictions.' The artists, for example, were obliged to travel to Mexico to acquire visas from the U.S. embassy's consulate in the capital of this neighbouring country. 'I think,' he said, 'that an effort like this is also an expression of the desire of both parties to transcend the blockade that has affected us for decades.' Music is taking centre stage on the artistic agenda. All genre are being presented, from concert music to rap, including *trova*, with a concert by Pablo and Haydée Milanés, and dance music in the hands of Los Van Van. Cuba's new generation of jazz musicians will be noticed.

In addition to the National Ballet of Cuba, there will be performances by the Malpaso and Irene Rodríguez companies. Theatrical works to be presented include *Las lágrimas amargas* by Petra von Kant, performed by El Público (director: Carlos Díaz), and *Diez millones* from the Argos Teatro (director: Carlos Celdrán).

Outstanding among the visual arts expositions are those of Roberto Fabelo, Roberto Diago, Esterio Segura, and Manuel Mendive - who will also perform with musicians Adonis González and Yosvany Terry.

May 12 will be Family Day, a community event that will begin with a parade of children's marching bands, with Miguel Faílde's danzón orchestra participating, followed by rumba and salsa demonstrations and classes, along with batucada, in Cuba's Brazilian style. On the 19th, the classic *Guantanamera* will be performed by U.S. amateur choirs.

**Granma, April 6**

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#### INTERNATIONAL SPORT



### **Cuba with strong team for Wrestling World Cup**

If visa is approved Cuba will attend the Wrestling World Cup in Iowa, US, with a very strong team of nine freestyle

fighters, said a National Federation spokesman.

The head of coaches of the technical group, Julio Mendieta, remarked that Cuba is taking its best wrestlers to that match as part of preparation for the Central American and Caribbean Games of Barranquilla, from July 19 to August 3.

Among the main figures of the squad he mentioned the world medalists Yowlys Bonne, (61 kg,) Alejandro Valdés (65kg), Liván López (74kg) and Reineris Salas (97kg).

Reineris Andreu, 57 kg, Franklin Marén (70kg), Yoan Zuelueta (79kg), Yurieski Torreblanca (86kg) and Yudenni Alpajón (125kg) complete the team.

According to Mendieta, Cuba achieved the right to participate in the Iowa World Cup for its performance at the Paris World Championships last year, in which its gladiators won two bronze medals.

In addition, they finished in seventh place by countries to qualify to the US competition, with competitors from the eight best nations in freestyle wrestling.

Finally, he noted that after the Iowa World Cup they will enter seven fighters for the Pan-American Wrestling Championship in Lima, from May 3 to 6.

***Prensa Latina, April 4***

***Text edited by David Reade (www.netmedianz.com), on behalf of the Cuban Embassy, Wellington, from Cuban news agency sources.***

***Embassy of Cuba in New Zealand***

***<http://misiones.minrex.gob.cu/en/new-zealand>***

